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BOOK REVIEWS

How to Study and Teaching How to Study. By F. M. McMURRY. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1909. viii+324. \$1.25 net.

It seems to the reviewer that this book is one of the most suggestive and useful that has come from the pen of this author. In justification of his inquiry, he states in the beginning that there is much uncertainty in the minds of most students and even of most teachers as to what one should do who proposes to study a lesson effectively. The naïve view seems to be that study should consist in memorizing some set assignment of text. At least there is little recognition of the necessity of appreciating clearly the problem of the lesson and of definite reflection upon it.

It is refreshing to find the author frankly espousing the dynamic conception of learning, in which motive, purpose, and problem are vital factors as over against mere absorption of ready made information. In line with this conception he points out as the fundamental prerequisite of study the provision of some specific purpose or problem as the starting-point for the study of each lesson. Then follow in order the discussion of how the one who studies must supplement the thought of the author, must be prepared to organize the material he faces from the point of view of his problem, and, furthermore, judge of the relative worth of the data and of the interpretations of them which the books studied present. Memorizing also has a place in study, but is only fifth in rank. We may remark that while the discussion of this phase is suggestive it is hardly up to date on the psychological side, the presentation not differing materially from that of James's *Principles of Psychology*.

The author next discusses the use of ideas as the sixth factor in study, making a strong plea for the legitimacy of practical aims in education generally as well as for the necessity of using in some form or other the specific acquisitions of daily study. The need of assuming a tentative rather than a fixed attitude toward knowledge is next discussed, and last but not least the importance of maintaining one's own individuality in one's study is forcefully presented. First and last, proper study must help the person find himself, help him build up a more definite personality. The subordination of the self of the pupil required by many school practices does not conduce to this most needful of all growths.

In the discussion of each topic the author first treats the problem in its general aspects, then by illustration and suggestion he shows that children have the ability to react along the line under discussion, and last of all he gives practical hints for teaching children to react in these various ways in their actual study of school lessons.

The last chapter, on "The Full Meaning of Study: The Relation of Study to Children and to the School," is full of practical suggestion.

On the whole, the book is a valuable contribution to our literature of elementary pedagogy, and even advanced students will not find it without

suggestiveness. If any criticism were to be passed upon it, it would probably be that it is expanded beyond any real need for even the elementary student. Some of the discussions are almost interminable. This lack of condensation is however remedied in some measure by the full marginal analysis of the subject-matter of each paragraph.

IRVING KING

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The Psychology of Thinking. By IRVING ELGAR MILLER. New York: Macmillan, 1909. Pp. xxv+303. \$1.25 net.

The biological view of thinking and its significance for education is here presented for the lay reader and beginning student in psychology much more clearly than in any general introductory text. Heretofore the student has been obliged to pick out the functional view piecemeal, as from Angell's text, or to be content with brief statements or occasional applications, as in Thorndike's *Elements* and Judd's *Psychology*. Dr. Miller's book, however, will not take the place of an introductory text. It attempts to cover only those mental processes directly involved in thinking. Neither does it pretend to be an exhaustive treatment of the thought-process such as an advanced student would expect in a psychology of logic. Its mission is rather to make the organic nature of thought plain in non-technical language and to show what advantage this interpretation has for solving the problems of life. Instructors in psychology in normal schools and colleges will, therefore find this an exceptionally valuable supplementary text. Dr. Miller has himself used the substance of the book in his courses at the Milwaukee Normal School and in a summer course in the School of Education of the University of Chicago.

The "seed thoughts" of Dewey, to which the author acknowledges his indebtedness, form the basis for the book. Thought is set forth as an organic process arising under specific needs for adjustment. As preliminary to the study of thinking, the author sets forth the general biological point of view and compares the unconscious with the conscious modes of adjustment. He then takes up imagination, conception, judgment, and inductive and deductive reasoning, entirely from the functional standpoint. That each of these processes shows an identity of function while there is a growing perfection of its technique is one of the central ideas of his treatment. The same process can be recognized in the building-up of vague unreflective concepts as in the explicit clearly conscious construction of logical concepts. The image, the concept, and the judgment become the tools of thought in fully conscious thinking. Induction is regarded as a process of refining the tools of thought, while deduction is manifested in the use of these tools.

In pointing out the inadequacy of the older and formal descriptions of conception and reasoning Dr. Miller helps the student to understand the difference between a structural analysis of the products of the thought-process and the description of those processes as they actually occur under the vital demands for adjustment. In conception, for example, one does not start with given images